Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) An implant for providing support to an anatomical structure comprising:

a) an elongate segment of material having first and second opposed ends, said segment of material being operatively positionable adjacent said anatomical structure to be supported; and

b) at least one anchor mechanism integrally formed upon a respective one of said ends of said segment of material, said anchor mechanism being operatively configured to be advanceable into a soft tissue mass at a target site in a first direction and resistant to movement in an opposite direction in the soft tissue, the anchor mechanism being configured to become permanently fixed in position within the soft tissue.

2. (Original) The implant of claim 1 wherein said implant includes two anchor mechanisms attached to said segment of material, each anchor mechanism being formed on a respective one of said opposed ends of said segment of material.

3. (Original) The implant of claim 2 wherein said first and second anchor mechanisms are operatively positioned to be advanced through a mass of soft tissue in generally opposed or generally parallel directions relative one another.

4. (Original) The implant of claim 1 wherein said segment of material comprises a sling.

5. (Original) The implant of claim 4 wherein said sling is fabricated from a material selected from the group consisting of synthetic material, natural material, tissue harvested from a host, and combinations thereof.

6. (Original) The implant of claim 3 wherein each anchor mechanism comprises at least one generally Y-shaped prong having a cord extending therethrough.

7. (Original) The implant of claim 6 wherein said anchor mechanism comprises a plurality of linearly arranged Y-shaped prongs, each respective one of said plurality of prongs having a cord extending medially therethrough.

8. (Previously Presented) The implant of claim 3 wherein each anchor mechanism comprises at least one generally chevron-shaped prong having a cord extending therethrough.

9. (Original) The implant of claim 8 wherein said anchor mechanism comprises a plurality of linearly arranged chevron-shaped prongs, each respective one of said plurality of prongs having a cord extending medially therethrough.

10. (Original) The implant of claim 3 wherein each respective anchor mechanism comprises a spiral-shaped screw.

11-15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently Amended) A method for surgically implanting a sling to provide support to ~~beneath~~ an anatomical structure within a patient comprising the steps:

a) providing an implantable sling comprising ~~comprised of~~ an elongate segment of material having first and second opposed ends, each respective opposed end having an anchor mechanism formed thereon such that each respective anchor mechanism is advanceable through said soft tissue at a ~~said~~ selected target site in a first direction and resistant to movement in an opposite direction;

b) providing a ~~non-mechanically assisted~~ deployment mechanism for positioning said anchor mechanisms of said implantable sling within said target site of said soft tissue, said deployment mechanism comprising a manually operable handle having a deployment member extending distally therefrom, said deployment member being detachably fastenable to a respective one of said anchor mechanisms of said implantable sling[[,]] ~~said deployment mechanism further comprising an actuator for selectively detaching said anchor mechanism from said deployment member of said deployment mechanism~~;

c) mounting a respective one of said anchor mechanisms of said implantable sling upon said distal end of said deployment member of said deployment mechanism;

d) advancing said anchor mechanism mounted upon said distal end of said deployment member in step c) toward a site selected from the group consisting of a first target site about a first side of the obturator foramen, a first target site about the [[of]] rectus fascia and a first target site about the [[of]] pubocervical fascia of said patient and selectively detaching said anchor mechanism from said deployment member such that said anchor mechanism becomes embedded within a first mass of soft tissue;

e) mounting the respective other anchor mechanism of said implantable sling upon said distal end of said deployment member and advancing said respective other anchor mechanism toward a site selected from the group consisting of a second target site about the respective other side of said obturator foramen, a second target site about the [[of]] rectus fascia and a second target site about the [[of]] pubocervical fascia, said second target sites being dissimilar to said first target sites ~~of rectus fascia and pubocervical fascia~~, such that ~~said respective other anchor mechanism extends in a direction dissimilar to said first anchor mechanism and~~ said segment of material is positioned to support ~~beneath~~ the anatomical structure of said patient; and

f) detaching said respective other anchor mechanism from said deployment member and embedding said anchor mechanism within a second mass of soft tissue such that said anchor mechanisms resist movement in the opposite direction ~~toward~~

~~one another~~ and securely position said sling to support ~~beneath~~ the anatomical structure of said patient.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 16 wherein said anatomical structure is selected from the group consisting of the urethra and the vaginal wall of said patient and in steps (d) and (e) said anchor mechanisms are advanced toward said sites ~~sides~~ via a single incision made in a vagina.

18. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein in step (a), each respective one of said anchor mechanisms of said implantable sling comprise a plurality of linearly arranged Y-shaped prongs, each respective one of said plurality of prongs having a cord extending medially therethrough; and
wherein in steps (d) and (e), said anchor mechanisms are advanced by extending said cord with said generally Y-shaped anchor members formed thereon through said soft tissue.

19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 16 wherein in step (a) said anchor mechanism comprises a plurality of generally chevron-shaped anchor mechanisms ~~linearly arranged Y-shaped members~~ having a cord extending medially therethrough; and wherein in steps (d) and (e) said anchor mechanisms are advanced by extending said cord with said generally chevron-shaped anchor mechanisms formed thereon through said soft tissue.

20-26. (Cancelled)

27. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim [[1]] 16 wherein in step (a), each anchor mechanism on the implantable sling comprises a cord having at least one outwardly extending barbed portion disposed adjacent a distal end of the cord, and wherein the implantable sling comprises a ~~and having~~ mesh material extending

axially aftwardly from the barbed portion ~~along the cord~~ in general axial alignment with the barbed portion.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27 wherein in step (a), the cord is configured as a cable having reinforcing material therein to provide structural rigidity to the anchor mechanism.

29. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 27 wherein in step (a), each anchor mechanism comprises a pair of the barbed portions extending outwardly from radially opposed sides of the cord to form a dual-prong configuration and wherein the implantable sling has ~~having~~ mesh material extending axially aftwardly from each one of the barbed portions.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 27 wherein in step (a), the mesh material is oriented such that frayed fiber ends of the mesh material extend in a generally outward direction to resist rearward movement of the anchor mechanisms once implanted within the soft tissue.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 16 wherein in step (a), each anchor mechanism comprises a cord having at least one outwardly extending barbed portion disposed adjacent a distal end of the cord and wherein the implantable sling has ~~having~~ mesh material extending axially aftwardly from the barbed portion ~~along the cord~~ in general axial alignment with the barbed portion.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 31 wherein in step (a), the cord is configured as a cable having reinforcing material therein to provide structural rigidity to the anchor mechanism.

33. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 31 wherein in step (a), each anchor mechanism comprises a pair of the barbed portions extending outwardly

from radially opposed sides of the cord to form a dual-prong configuration and wherein the implantable sling has ~~having~~ mesh material extending axially aftwardly from each one of the barbed portions.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 31 wherein in step (a), the mesh material is oriented such that frayed fiber ends of the mesh material extend in a generally outward direction to resist rearward movement of the anchor mechanisms once implanted within the soft tissue.

35. (New) The method of Claim 16 wherein the first and second target sites are about the obturator foramen, and steps (d) and (f) comprise embedding the anchor mechanism within first and second soft tissue masses that include muscle tissue about the obturator foramen.